

REMARKS

Claims 3-19 are pending in this application. Claim 10 stands allowed. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 2 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 3-9 are amended and claims 11-19 are added. No new matter is added.

I. Allowed/Allowable Subject Matter

The allowance of claim 10, as well as the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3 and 4 is appreciated. The subject matter of claims 3 and 4 is indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their base claim and any intervening claims. As claims 3 and 4 are rewritten in independent form, claims 3 and 4, as well as their dependent claims 5-9 and 11-15, are also in condition for allowance. The remaining pending claims are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed below.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 2 and 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,486,503 to Fossum in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,974,003 to Ohnuki et al. Because claims 1 and 2 are canceled, the rejection of those claims is moot. The rejection of claims 5-8 is respectfully traversed because claims 5-8 depend from allowable claim 3 which has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 5-8 is respectfully requested.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Fossum in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,243,136 to Sasaki and further in view of Ohnuki. Because claim 9 depends from allowable claim 3, the rejection of claim 9 is traversed and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. New Claims

As indicated above, claims 11-15 depend from allowable claim 4. Accordingly, the applied references fail to disclose each and every feature recited in claims 11-15.

Regarding claims 16-18, none of the applied references, whether considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest each and every feature recited therein. For example, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest an electronic camera comprising: a shutter mechanism that turns a shutter to an opened state or a closed state; and a mirror mechanism that performs a mirror up operation and a mirror down operation; an image-capturing device that stores an electrical charge achieved by performing photoelectric conversion on a subject image projected on a photosensitive surface within a period when the shutter is in the opened state and reads out the electrical charge to generate an image signal after the shutter is turned to the closed state; a photographing preparation device that executes photographing preparations including the mirror down operation performed by the mirror mechanism for photographing a next frame, wherein the photographic preparation device executes the mirror down operation performed by the mirror mechanism in parallel with reading out of the electrical charge stored within a just previous period when the shutter was in the opened state.

As admitted in the Office Action, Fossum teaches away from the use of a mechanical shutter (see "Response to Arguments" at page 2 of the Office Action). Accordingly, Fossum cannot teach the feature recited in claim 16 of reading out of the electrical charge stored within a just previous period when the shutter was in the opened state. In other words, Fossum does not disclose or suggest reading out of the electrical charge in connection with the operation of a mechanical shutter.

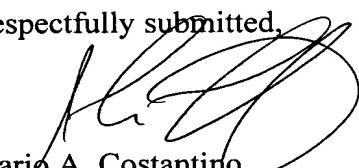
Additionally, as Ohnuki merely discloses a film camera, Ohnuki fails to disclose or suggest the reading out of the electrical charge, as recited in claims 16-19. Ohnuki also fails to disclose or suggest performing any process or taking any action that would reduce the amount of time required for preparing to photograph the next frame while the reading out of the electrical charge is being executed. For at least these reasons, claims 16-19 are allowable over the applied references.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 3-19 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Amendment Transmittal
Request for Continued Examination

Date: June 10, 2005

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